

A. J. K. A
LETTER

To the Reverend

Mr *John Ollyffe,*

Touching the

DECLARATION

O F

Assent and Consent

TO THE

LITURGY

AND THE

Imposition of certain things scrupled therein.

L O N D O N,

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Yard, 1703.



A
LETTER

To the Reverend

Mr *John Ollyffe, &c.*

SIR,

I Thank you for the Book Published by you, Entituled *A Defence of Ministerial Conformity*, in Answer to Mr. Calamy; which I have read over with much Satisfaction. But I find it is in this, as it doth use to fall out in other things, that that which giveth Satisfaction to one, doth not do so to others. I have had the opportunity of conversing with some Persons about the subject matter thereof; from whom having been informed of certain Objections that have been made against some parts of it, I shall now take the freedom to acquaint you therewith, and with the Answers and Replies, which I have made in your De-

fence, in which I believe I shall have your Concurrence with me.

As far as I can understand, the main and principal Objection that is made by our dissenting Brethren, is with respect to *the Declaration of Assent and Consent*, required in the Act of Uniformity; which they think you have given too strait an Exposition of, as if it had relation only to *the use* of all things, that are prescribed for Practice, when yet there is no such Limitation made in the words of the Declaration itself; but there the Assent and Consent is declared to be given to all things *contained*, as well as those, which are *prescribed* in the Liturgy. Whereas you say, in the words *contained* and *prescribed*, the conjunction *And* must necessarily couple them; so that only those things that are *both* contained and prescribed *for use*, are the proper Objects of our Assent and Consent. And that Expression so much insisted upon *to the use*, they say was opposed by some of those that were then in the Legislation (as they have had an account thereof) and that it was not put into the Declaration: And Mr. *Baxter* saith, when a Bill was sent to the Lords, and was returned with that Proviso, that the Assent and Consent should be understood only to be *to the use* of the things
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injoined ; that it was rejected by the Commons for certain reasons, in which the Peerage acquiesced.

Now I shall give you an account of what answer I have made to this, to begin first with what is urg'd from Mr. *Baxter*, we have no way to come to a certain Knowledge of that matter. And tho' Mr. *Baxter* saith, the Commons rejected that Clause, sent to them from the Lords, yet there is no necessity to conclude from thence, that the reason thereof was, because the Parliament intended that the Declaration should mean more than a consent to use the service. But the true Reason may be very well conceived to be this ; that the matter was so plainly exprest and limited already in the Preamble to the Declaration, and in other places in the Act, as also in the very form of the Words in which the Declaration is made, that there was no need to insert those Words into the Declaration it self. And in this the Lords acquiesced ; which it is not likely they would have done, but would have had a farther Conference about it ; if upon the Commons Intimation they had not been sensible, that it was sufficiently done already. And Mr. *Baxter's* Discourse in this matter is directed against the

Sense of a certain sort of Persons, which we never met with, and are very far from.

As for the Account, which our Brethren say they have had from other Particular Persons concerning the meaning and Intent of the Act in this business; I shall make use of Mr. Corbet's words in his *enquiry into the Oxford Oath*, page 10. in Answer to it. *It is agreed, that the Law being the will of the Lawgiver, must be taken in the meaning, which is therein immediately signified to be his Will; and that meaning being not his secret or private, but his declared and publick Will, must some way or other be so evident and open, as that the Subjects may be sufficiently informed thereof, if they be not Culpably negligent.* Now when our Brethren question, whether the Sense by you laid down be agreeable to the Will of the Lawgiver, how shall we come to a satisfaction herein? We cannot know this by some Expressions, that have occasionally fallen from particular Persons, tho' they might be Members of Parliament, or Convocation, or the advisers of such as were so. For suppose, that some such might oppose the Sense by you given (we know not, that any one of them did, but suppose they did) perhaps it might be in heat of dispute; or suppose they gave their sentiments

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Calmly, yet the sense of particular Persons is by no means to be Construed to be the Sense of the whole Body, that is concern'd in such a matter, unless the Majority of that Body do consent to such a publick enacting and Declaration thereof, as in plain Terms may be evident to all the Subjects. And it is evident, that when things come to be weighed in great Assemblies, where all are not of a mind, the words use to be adapted to such a Sense, as the rest can comply with, and this on purpose, by putting in some, and putting out others. And what *at last* is done, is to be lookt upon as the publick Sense, which the Subjects only are to take Notice of, according to the Natural import and use of the words and other Circumstances or words in such a Law or Discourse, as doth attend them. It is manifest what was the Private Sense of many, that set down the third Article of the *Descent into Hell*, yet that being their private Sense, and not the publick sense *now*, our Brethren do without scruple Subscribe it. The like to which might be shewn in other Articles.

To find out therefore the meaning of the Lawgiver in the present Case yet farther, I shall go on to transcribe Mr. Corbets words. p. 11. *Sometimes the meaning of the*

Lawgiver may be so clearly exprest in the Law it self, or by some other Declarative Act, that there needs no farther enquiry about it. But in Case the meaning is not thus clearly signified, then of necessity, recourse must be had to a rational Interpretation. And according to Reason, that Sense which the words do conveniently Import, and which the constitution of the Realm and other Laws thereof, and the ordinary legal Practice do require, is to be taken for the declared and publick Will and Meaning of the Lawgiver; especially if it answer the design, or end of that particular Law. And then afterwards, p. 13. If any shall Imagine him to have a private Will or Aim in the contrivance of a Law, different from his publick and open Will and Meaning, the Subjects are not concerned therein, because it is not the Law or Will of the Lawgiver as such. For the Law is the Will of the Governour, not as meerly Existent, but as Declared. Wherefore touching this Declaration, that which the Subjects are concerned in, is to know what is the apparent or sufficiently declared Meaning of the Law-makers therein; and that the same is just and good.

Now then to go on and to apply this to the present Business, and to find out what is the meaning of the Lawgiver in this Law or Declaration, we must consider the

the Law and Declaration it self, as it lieth, and the end and design thereof. And first as to the latter.

It is an Axiom in Logick, *Finis dat modum & mensuram mediis*. And this Declaration is to serve some end; and the end being once found out, that is to determine and State both the manner and the measure of the means. And to stretch and enlarge the means farther than is necessary or proper for the Attainment of the designed end, would be weak and absurd. And therefore to stretch the Sense of the Declaration farther than is necessary to the End or Design to which it is to tend, is altogether groundless. Now as the end of subscribing the Articles is to secure Orthodoxy, and Uniformity in Doctrine; so the end of Assenting to the Liturgy is to secure an Uniformity of Practice in the worship of God. And that this is the end or design thereof, we are not left meerly to guess, but it is plain and express in the very Title of the Act, which is entituled, *An Act for the Uniformity of Publick Prayers, and Administration of Sacraments and other Rites and Ceremonies, &c.* And is also exprest in the Body of the Act to the same purpose, to be *an Universal agreement in the publick worship of God*. And then it is immediately

ly added, *to the Intent that every Person may certainly know the Rule, to which he is to conform in publick worship and Administration of Sacraments. Be it enacted, that all Ministers shall be Bound to say and Use the Morning Prayer, &c. According to the Use of the Church of England.* And then afterwards they are required to Declare *both Assent and Consent* to the Use of what is contained and prescribed. And this *to the use* is two or three times repeated in other places of the Act. It is evident therefore that the Liturgy is prescribed and enjoined only as a means to the Attaining of the *aforsaid end*, of Uniformity of Practice, or universal agreement in the Publick Worship of God, and is limited to that end; and therefore ought not to be stretcht to any other. And our Declaration of Assent and Consent to the Liturgy is only to the same end. And so we are limited and Confined, as Mr. Hoadly well observeth, to give our Assent and Consent *both* to the use of the things Contained and Prescribed, in order to that end; and not our Consent to one thing and Assent to another; our Consent to matters of Use and Practice, and Assent to matters or Propositions of Faith and Doctrine; but are to give *both* only to the use of those things
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that are to be used, that there may be an Uniformity in Practice or Worship, which is the end. So that the Act it self, hath plainly determined this matter so, as one would think should put it beyond all dispute. And the Minister in making this Declaration is expressly tyed up to such a meaning therein: And if He will mean more it is more than the Act obligeth him to, or doth really intend, if we may Judge of the Intention of it by its own express Words. And therefore it is to stretch the meaning beyond the Design and Intent of the Act, which ought not to be done, nor is there any thing of true Conscientiousness in it. So plain are these things in the Eyes of Conformists, that Dr. *Stillington* in his Sermon of Separation, p. 49. hath these Words. *It is a hard Case with a Church, when Men shall set their Wits to strain every thing to the worst Sense; to stretch Laws beyond the Intent and Design of them, to gather together all the doubtful and obscure passages, &c. And will not distinguish between the approbation of the Use, and of the Choice of things. For upon such Terms as these Men think to justify the present Divisions.* I quote the Paragraph, to shew how clear that great Man thought our Sense of the Declaration to be.

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And when some do object, as Mr. Corbet expresseth it in the other Case, p. 12. *That the Law is not so clearly exprest in the Words taken by themselves, as to prevent all mistaking and doubting thereof, in all that are Men of Understanding and make use of it. But that the Words may bear a far more extensive Sense, than what may be judged to be the true Intent and Meaning of the Law-makers.* I answer again in his words, *the Sense of many Laws doth lie in a narrower compass, than the full extent of the Words taken by themselves, as is manifest in those divine Laws, Swear not at all. Call no Man Father upon Earth. And the Law-makers have not by any authoritative Declaration, or open Act signified, that their meaning in this Declaration is as extensive as any Sense, that the Words taken by themselves will bear; therefore that Sense only, which the Words do fairly bear, and which suits best with the design of this very Law, is in reason to be taken for their declared and publick Will and Meaning in this Declaration.* And in that Sense then the Declaration is to be made.

Nor is there any just reason to conceive, that the Law makers did intend, as our Brethren represent this matter, that every Minister should hereby testify his highest Justification, and Commendation of every Point
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and Syllable, &c. in the whole Book, and every Page and Line of it ; which is more than (as they themselves alledge) can be done to any Translation of the Bible it self ; when at the same time they expect, that such just and favourable Constructions should be allowed to it, as in common Equity ought to be allowed to all humane Writings. Nor can we conceive, that they should require such highest Justification and Commendation, &c. to be declared in all times to come ; when they in the same Book profess, that the particular Forms of divine Worship, and the Rites and Ceremonies appointed to be used therein, being things in their own Nature indifferent and alterable, and so acknowledged ; It is but reasonable, that upon weighty and important Considerations, according to the various Exigency of Times and Occasions, such Changes and Alterations should be made therein, as to those that are in Authority should from time to time seem either necessary or expedient. For supposing that some Persons might in the highest manner justify and commend every Line and Syllable at one time, yet when at another time alterations become necessary, or expedient (as in the Judgment of the Law-givers they may do) how could a Declaration with such a meaning be enjoined or taken by those very Persons, or any of the like Sentiments with them, who
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were presumed at first to *testify their highest Justification, &c.*? And when we have the constant Practice of them, that make this Declaration, endeavouring in their places the alteration of many things, and testifying their desire thereof?

But to go on with Mr. Corbet, Page 13. If it be objected, the Law-makers may in some particular Law, have a meaning repugnant to Equity, and to the ordinary Course of Law and legal Practice: my answer is, that the Reverence and Charity, which is due to our Superiors, forbids us to conceive that they have such a Meaning, unless we be compelled to it by convincing reason; now we are not compelled to conceive thus by the Words of the Declaration; for they carry it fairly for a very good Meaning: Nor by the Scope of the Law (which appears to be a strong Argument for our Sense) nor yet by any publick or open Act of the Law-makers. Have the Majority of them, as so many single Persons, declared such a Meaning, as is suggested in the Objections? Or can it reasonably be imagined, that they ever would so declare? Or is there any other Evidence, or convincing Reason to be produced for it? The Will of the Law-giver, which the Subjects are bound to take notice of, is that which is so publick and open, that they may be inform'd of it, if they be not culpably negligent; as is more fully

fully exprest from the same Author in what I quoted before.

And farther, if we consider the Sense and meaning of the Words of the Declaration *in themselves*, I think verily, that our Brethren have no reason to run away with it, as if it made for them. But I must needs be of opinion, and can Judge no otherwise, but that the *very Words of the Declaration* in which the Objection lieth, ought to be understood in our Sense, and no other; and that the Sense which our Brethren put on those Words, is against the usual Construction of Speech too, as well as against the plain Determination, and end or design of the Law.

For it is a Maxim in Law (and the constant usage and Construction of words agreeth to it) *In toto jure, generi per speciem Derogatur*. Now the Assent and Consent is to all and every thing *Contained* and *Prescribed* in the Book, &c. That is, that are so contained, as to be also prescribed, or that are not only Contained but prescribed. For the things contained in the Book are of two Kinds or Species, *viz. Propositions* and *Prescriptions*. Now the common usage is, that when any thing is spoken or exprest first in the General, and then afterwards a Specification is added, or a special expressi-
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on is subjoined to the General, and comprehended under it, that then the *Genus* or General Expression is limited by that *Species*, and ought to be extended no farther. *Species semper generi solet derogare, quotiescunq; Speciei & generis simul vel seperatim fit mentio, vid. Bronchorst in tit. de Regulis juris ad L. 80.* As if there should be a Vote in Parliament, that the right of Election in the Borough of *A.* is in all and every of them, that are *settled Inhabitants* in the Town of *A.* And that do *pay Scot and Lot therein.* The last Words so limit the former, that no *settled Inhabitant* can Elect, who doth not *pay Scot and Lot.* So also in Declarations, if I say, I do renounce and abhor all and every thing *contained* in such a Book, and *Printed in an Italick Character*, the renunciation is Limited to those things, that are printed in that Character, and is not to extend to all that is contained indifferently and not so Printed. So likewise in Legacies, I do bequeath to *A. B.* All and every thing *contained* in my great Trunk, and *Markt with the Letters, C. D.* there is nothing else bequeathed, but what is so Markt, tho' the general Word *contained* did go before, *that* being limited by what followeth. In these and in an hundred other instances
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(of which this in the Declaration is one) there can be no probable reason given, why the *Species* should be subjoined, but to limit and derogate from the *Genus*.

There are Exceptions to this Maxim, but they are such as do not in the least invalidate the application thereof to the point in hand. For instance, this Rule doth not hold in Poetical and Rhetorical Writings, where there is not commonly that exactness of Speech used, but many words, general and special, are indifferently huddled and joined together, the more to illustrate the matter. Nor doth it hold, when there is not a Kind or *Species* subjoined, but some *Individual* is mentioned in chief, or as singular in the Kind. As if an order were sent to *all the Inhabitants* of *A.* and to the *Mayor* thereof. Nor lastly, doth it hold, when the *Species* is mentioned first, and the *Genus* afterwards. As, I bequeath to *A. B.* all things markt with *C. D.* and all things contained in my great Trunk. *Si uni & eidem Species & Genus legetur, tum si primo mentio speciei facta sit, deinde generis, hoc casu species generi non derogat; sed illud potius speciem ampliat & legatum auget.* But it is contrary, *si primo generis mentio fiat, deinde speciei*: As it is in our Case. The things prescribed are one Kind or *Species* of things

contained in the Book. And the *Genus* is first mentioned, then the *Species*. And therefore the *special* Expression *Prescribed*, must limit the *general* word *Contained*, to all those things only that are prescribed, exclusively of others, that are of another Kind or Species in the Book, *viz.* such things as are asserted or propounded in Prefaces, or other places in the Book, but not prescribed therein for our use.

Now Sir having thus given you my Thoughts touching this first Objection that hath been made, with respect to the Declaration of Assent and Consent; I shall acquaint you with one more of another nature. And these two are the only considerable ones that I have heard. This latter relates to some things in the Offices of Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, and your Explication and Exposition thereof; according to which in *your* way, the Cross and God-fathers in publick Baptism, and kneeling at the Lord's Supper, are not made by the Church, such *necessary* Terms of Communion, as to exclude all that scruple them, as Mr. Calamy pretends they are. Now our dissenting Brethren think, that this *your* way of avoiding and answering that scruple about the Imposition of these things made by Mr. Calamy, is meerly an Evasion
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or cutting of the Knot, instead of an untying it. And some of our own Brethren in the Church think, that you should rather have vindicated the Impositions, as Mr. *Hoadly* hath done, than took that way to evade them.

Now I must confess, that I am of your Mind in what you say, and think your Answer valid and good, notwithstanding this Objection made by our Brethren of one kind or other. Nor do I think, it is any eluding of the Law, or doing contrary to the Design and Intent of the Law-makers. For your Answer respects some Cases only, not of usual or ordinary Practice, but extraordinary and of Necessity, in relation to the immovable Scruples of some about the lawfulness of these unnecessary Additions to the Sacraments; who yet are very desirous of partaking of them, in Case they could be any way dispens'd with, as to these things scrupled. As to these extraordinary Cases, whether the Law-makers did foresee them or not; or intended to make any express Provision about them; yet it is plain there *is* such a Latitude left by them, as that a Provision *is really* made for a dispensation or connivance therein, in case of such invincible Scruples. And seeing positive Laws do not bind *ad semper*, as

you urge very well against Dr. F. of *Whit-church*, Def. P. 42. and as our Lord sheweth in case of the Sabbath, *Mat. 12*. It is reasonable, that in all such Cases of necessity (extraordinary, and perhaps unforeseen) there should be some relaxation of the Law, according to the general grounds of Equity. And tho' no such Allowance or Dispensation were given in the Liturgy, yet it is reasonable, that it should always be presumed and supposed. There is no particular mention of the private Baptism of the Adult, which gave occasion to your *Addendum* about it, yet it is most manifest, that in some Cases it must be allowed; as in case of dangerous Sicknes, of Persecution, &c. Thus Bishop Hall in his Apology against the Brownists, Sect. 32. giveth five limitations of the use of the enjoined Ceremonies; the last of which is, *that Men be not so tyed to them, but that by occasion they may be omitted, so it be without Offence and Contempt*. And one would think, that it should be always allowed as most reasonable, that the lesser should give place to the greater. And if in case of a divine Command, where God hath required Sacrifice and Mercy both, and when one doth interfere with the other, *Sacrifice* as the lesser, must for that time be left undone; one would think it should
much

much more hold in a Case between the Commands of God and Men ; and a few unnecessary things enjoined by Man, tho' in themselves lawful, yet being verily thought unlawful by some of well-meaning Minds, should be omitted for that time, rather than the Ordinances of God themselves should be so, and rather than there should be a Schism made, and Persons should go from the Church to those places, where they may partake of these Ordinances, without those scrupled Additions. I am ready to submit to the Reasons of any, by which I may be otherwise informed ; but I must continue to be of this Mind till I am so. And seeing there is a Latitude or Liberty left by the Church in such Cases, and the Expressions are so ordered as to countenance such a Dispensation, (whether the matter was foreseen or unforeseen by the Church, it is all one to me) I am verily persuaded, as I believe you are, that I ought in Conscience to make use of the same, out of a charitable respect to the doubting or misinform'd Conscience of my weak Brother, rather than insist stiffly upon unnecessary things, to the breach of Charity, and giving an occasion to farther Rents and Schisms in the Church, when they may be avoided.

These things now premised, I must indeed grant and do believe, that what you say about omitting the scrupled and supposed Impositions, being allowed by the Church in certain Cases, is a full answer to those Instances alledg'd by Mr. *Calamy*; and it seems you had nothing farther in your Eye, than fairly to answer him. And therefore I am of opinion, notwithstanding what is objected by some of our Brethren, that the Vindication of the Impositions was not necessary in *your* way, and your omission of such Vindication is no just or culpable Defect in your Answer.

But yet Sir, to speak freely, I am of the mind withal, that it would have been a very *useful Addition*; tho' it was not necessary to your *Defence*, if you had farther also proceeded thereunto, *ex abundante*; and that for two reasons, partly for the sake of those, that may not be so well satisfied with your Latitude in the Interpretation of those Offices; and partly because, tho' you may be supposed to have sufficiently answered Mr. *Calamy* in *your way* as to the Instances alledged, and so have answered his Argument *as it is urged*, yet it must be granted, that there are some terms of Communion so imposed, as that the Imposition of all cannot be avoided *that way*, and so you have

not answered the Argument, as it *might be* urged, if it were prest home. And it must be said, that Mr. *Calamy* did not see how far his own Objection extended or might extend. For he might have proceeded farther than he hath done; and yet I doubt not but to shew withal, that he hath gone so far in his way of Argument, as to fight with what he offers to comply with, as well as with what he opposeth and argueth against.

I must own therefore to you, I am not against all Impositions, that may *accidentally* prove exclusive terms of Communion to some, tho' you did not think it to your purpose in your way of Defence to mention it. There is a vast difference between things that are *unlawful in themselves*, and so in their own nature are unwarrantably made 'Terms of Church Communion at any time; which is the Case with respect to many Impositions in the Church of *Rome*: And those things, that are in *themselves lawful*, but are only scrupled by some, whether they are so. The former Impositions are in their own nature unwarrantable and wicked, but not so the latter; tho they may accidentally prove exclusive Terms of Communion to some, by reason of their misapprehension of things. And Mr. *Cal-*

my and his Brethren must be of the same Mind, if they will judge consistently with their own Principles, and Concessions, and Practices in other things of this nature. And therefore Mr. *Calamy* ought not to have made this an Argument against the lawfulness of the Imposition of these things, about which the matter of our Dispute is in our Church, merely *as* an Imposition of things, which may prove *accidentally* exclusive Terms of Communion to some, unless he could prove the unlawfulness of the things in themselves, and so found his Argument against the unlawfulness of the Imposition upon *their* supposed unlawfulness. For to make an Imposition universally unlawful, and not to be complied with, merely *as* an Imposition, or because it may prove an Imposition of such things as may *accidentally* only prove exclusive Terms of Communion to some, is to militate against the Principles and Practices of himself and his Brethren in like Cases. And so the same Arguments that Mr. *Calamy* brings against the Cross, God-fathers and Kneeling, as made Terms of Communion, do hold against all determination of Circumstances in the worship of God, which any others do scruple, and thereby would be debarr'd Communion with us. For tho' there are distinct Objections

tions against these particular Ceremonies on other Accounts (which belong to the several Heads in your Defence) yet as to the matter of Imposition, as they are made Terms of Communion, there is no more Objection lyeth against the Imposition of them, than there doth against any other determination, supposing the things themselves lawful, which we now suppose, being only upon the matter of the Imposition. And so the Argument against Imposition of only *accidentally exclusive* Terms of Communion proves too much, if it proves any thing, and more than Mr. Calamy desires it should.

I shall give an Instance in some things. *Forms of Prayer* are scrupled by great numbers of Men, especially *as imposed*. And it is certain it is not absolutely necessary, that there should be such a determinate Form of Words used in Prayer. I have a Book now open before me, that pretends to give ten Arguments against *stinted Forms* made and imposed, containing high Accusations of them, *as putting an Affront on the Dignity and high Grace of the Almighty, as quenching the Spirit, &c.* Now such a Form we subscribe to use, and whoever scruples this is not only debar'd from one part of our Worship, and at one particular time, as in
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the Cases supposed by Mr. Calamy, but from the whole publick Worship at all times.

So for the determination of Time and Place in the Lord's Supper. As to Time it is determined to be in the Morning, which Imposition some have supposed to come in with Transubstantiation. Some call it a turning the Lord's *Supper* into a *Dinner*. Mr. *Jacob* giveth the reason for the Evening, because Christ suffered in the Evening of the World. Some plead for the having of it *after* Supper, as our Lord instituted it after the preceding Supper. And thus they, who insist upon this matter as part of our Saviour's Institution are shut out by the foregoing determination.

And thus, as to Place, our Churches are scrupled by some, as having been Places used formerly in Idolatrous Worship. And our Chancels much more, as an Imitation of the Jewish *Sanctum Sanctorum*, and as giving occasion to a proud advancing the Minister above the People, especially where there are Rails, and to the superstitious Conceit of a *Shechinah* there. And they who have such Scruples as these, will be shut out of Communion by the foregoing determinations.

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Thus also singing of Psalms *in metre*, with set Tunes, (not to mention Instruments) are scrupled by others. Nay our Bells, Clocks, Hour-Glasses, Fonts, Pulpits (and what not?) have found Sectaries of one kind or other, that have declared against them as Popish, and have professed, that they could never come near to worship there, where the least Rag of Popery is retained.

Yet these or such like determinations are lawful, yea requisite to be made, in the opinion even of our Brethren. Mr. *Baxter* gives numerous Instances of such Additions and Inventions in the worship of God, as are lawful to be made under the regulation of the general Laws of God; which are in *specie* undetermined in Scripture, and are left to be determined by humane Prudence. *Christ. Direct. tom. 3. qu. 133.* For none of these particulars are necessary in themselves. Worship might be without stinted Forms imposed: Sacraments at another Time and Place. Singing might be in Prose. And yet our Brethren themselves do not only practise diverse of these, and such like things, which others scruple, but offer to comply with these determinations, tho' thereby others be debarr'd from the publick Worship, and sometimes may have the
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Laws turn'd against them for their Non-compliance with them. And if these determinations were altered, the same Inconveniences would happen the other way, to the exclusion of others, who are for set Forms, because of the Mistakes and Indelicacies which they apprehend would be committed, at least, by some Ministers in the Ministration of the publick Offices. Our Brethren impose their own Form or Method on the People, who must join therein, or be gone: And how comes the Publick Authority, or Pastors united together to have less Power in this Case, than a particular Minister or single Pastor?

It seems therefore even from the Opinion and Practice of our Brethren, to be no unlawful thing, to have such Orders and Determinations settled, which may to some scrupulous Persons thro' their Weakness or Mistake, prove *accidentally* exclusive Terms of Communion. And therefore they must not think it strange of us, if we also think it a less Inconvenience, that Persons scrupling the Orders and Determinations, which we are required to submit to, and are verily persuaded are lawful, should be debarr'd or shut out of our Communion, till they are satisfied in those things, than that the Church should be deny'd a Power to make such

such lawful Determinations, as we suppose these to be.

If they think there is a difference between their Impositions, or those which they would consent to, and ours, it is plain, there is none in some things. As for instance, they have declared, that they could consent to an imposed Form of Prayer, as well as we, tho' they know it is invincibly scrupled by many, &c. : And as to other things, tho' there may be a difference in the things themselves, yet as to scrupled Impositions, *as* Impositions all are alike; and the same Arguments or Objections that are made against, and do affect ours as such, do likewise affect theirs. If they will argue therefore against the things imposed in themselves, which we comply with, *they* may; and I doubt not, but you will join Issue with them again about that matter if occasion be. But I think they had need forbear the censure of our Impositions *as such*, or as *accidentally* proving to some exclusive Terms of Communion, till they can vindicate their own, or those they do, or would comply with, from the same Imputation. *Turpe est Doctori; cum culpa redarguit ipsum.*

Thus

Thus have I in short represented to you, what I have observed and heard discours of these things, and have given you my Thoughts of them. You may make what use you please of this Writing, only taking care, that no more be known of the Writer, than that I am, Sir,

Your Affectionate Brother

And Humble Servant

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